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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, January 6, 1931.

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How-do-you-do Friends: Reports are being published of actual hunger and distress among farmers in the area of last season's drought. From what I know of conditions in certain parts of the drought area, I am of the opinion that many farm families are in real want, but are too proud to make their condition known. I think that this is a time when sentiment should be cast aside and help extended needy farm families to tide them over and make a new start. As one county worker in my neighborhood stated the situation -- crops were a failure -- especially garden crops -- cows are dry for want of feed -- chickens have largely been killed for food, and there are very few potatoes, turnips or canned goods in the storage.

In my garden calendar talks, I have stressed the importance of having a good home garden. It is already time for planting early vegetables in the more southern parts of the United States and it will not be many weeks before certain planting can be done in the south central parts of the country. It is going to be a problem, however, for farmers in the drought area to secure seeds and plants with which to establish a garden. This will be especially true in the case of seed potatoes. A small packet of tomato or cabbage seed will produce plenty of plants of those crops for the home garden, but peas, beans, onion sets, and potatoes for planting a home garden to supply the average farm family will cost in the neighborhood of \$.6 or \$.8 at present prices. The addition of the proper fertilizers will bring the bill to \$10 or \$12.

Not only will many farm families need food for themselves and feed for their livestock during the remainder of the winter, but they will need credit for seeds and plants with which to start a food garden.

Among the more important food crops that may be planted quite early are potatoes, onions, sets or plants, beets, carrots, cabbage, kale, turnips, lettuce, spinach, and peas. The second early list includes snap beans, sweet corn and tomatoes with slight protection. The tender list includes Lima beans -- dwarf and pole, pole beans such as Kentucky Wonder, melons, cucumbers, okra, peppers and eggplant.

Another important point is to have the garden plot well fertilized. On farms where manure is available a liberal amount -- say 5 tons on a half acre garden -- should be applied. This will largely take the place of commercial fertilizer, although fertilizers should be used for potatoes, onions, beets, carrots, lettuce, and spinach in addition to the manure.

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In the case of cabbage and tomatoes, an earlier start can be made by the use of southern outdoor-grown plants. Onions can also be grown to advantage from seed or from the seedling plants in preference to sets. I want to call your attention to the possibility of making good crops of the mild flavored Spanish or Valencia onion the seed of which can be sown in a coldframe and the plants transplanted to the garden when they are about three inches in height. Golden Acre cabbage is a small heading but very early variety but Copenhagen or one of the Wakefield strains should be planted for the main crop early cabbage. Marglobe tomato is a second early variety but has the advantage of being quite wilt resistant. Do not neglect to plant a patch of the little Henderson bush Lima beans for they come quickly and continue to bear for a long time, besides they are better adapted to southern conditions than the larger varieties.

List of Seeds and Plants for a Southern Early Garden:

1 Bu. Early potatoes - Irish Cobbler or Bliss Triumph	\$2.00
2 Qts. peas - 1 qt. Alaska - 1 qt. of a wrinkled variety such as Little Marvel or Laxton	1.00
1 Qt. Snap beans - Bountiful and Kidney wax - 1 pint each	.70
1 Pint Henderson Bush Lima beans	.30
1 Pint Kentucky Wonder Beans	.30
1 Ounce Detroit Dark Red Beet	.10
1 Packet each Golden Acre and Copenhagen Cabbage	.20
1 Ounce Chantenay Carrot	.10
1 Pound Early Adams Sweet Corn	.20
1 Pound Truckers Favorite corn	.20
1 Packet each of Cucumber, muskmelon and watermelon	.30
1 Packet Summer crookneck squash	.10
1 Ounce Turnip	.20
1 Packet White Boston Lettuce	.10
1 Packet Kohl-rabi	.10
1 Ounce - Kale - Scotch curled	.10
2 Pounds Onion sets	.50
1 Ounce Okra seed	.10
1 Packet Radish	.10
1 Packet tomato seed	.20
$\frac{1}{2}$ Pound spinach seed	.20
	<u>\$7.10</u>

The list of garden seeds that I have given for the South will require slight modification to adapt it to northern conditions, for example, in the case of sweet corn, very few varieties of which do well in the South, practically all of them can be grown in the North. Again in the case of Lima beans, the large pole Limas which can be grown throughout the greater part of the northern territory, are not adapted for growing in the South. The same is true of the larger podded bunch Limas. Sweet potatoes and okra are southern crops, however, both can be grown in the north central section.



The use of a hotbed and coldframe will aid materially in getting certain garden crops started early and earliness will be an important consideration this year. The main point is to get the garden started and producing something just as early as possible.

We can offer the southern gardener Farmers' Bulletin No. 934-F entitled "Home Gardening in the South," also Farmers' Bulletin No. 1371-F on the control of diseases and insects of garden vegetables. This latter bulletin, by the way, applies equally well to northern conditions. Then we have Farmers' Bulletin No. 937-F on the "Farm Garden in the North," and Farmers' Bulletin No. 1242-F on the permanent garden which includes asparagus, rhubarb and the small fruits, and Farmers' Bulletin No. 1044-F which is intended for the use of the town gardener who has a small plot of ground to cultivate.

Any of these bulletins will be sent without charge and don't forget that your own State college and experiment station is nearer to your problems than we are, and often your county agent can give you the best information.

Where a considerable number of gardeners are in a position to pool their orders for seeds and plants considerable saving in cost will result. This is especially true in the case of seed potatoes.

The Department workers desire to be of the greatest possible assistance to you in this matter of producing food for home use, and we will welcome your requests for such information as we may be able to give.

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